

## Zoning & Subdivisions Ordinance Updates starting the Approval Process

The City of Dexter has completed an update of the City's Zoning and Subdivisions Ordinances. The update process started in December 2020 and was led by a sub-committee of elected and appointed City officials with support from City planning staff and consultants. The drafts are now available for public review and input, as the Planning Commission and City Council go through their final review and adoption processes.

## What are the Ordinances?

**The Zoning Ordinance** is the local law regulating the location, size and design of buildings, what "uses" (e.g., residential, commercial, industrial) can happen where, sign location and size, landscaping, parking, and loading needed with new building, building additions and re-use. Fences, sheds and garages are covered by the Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Ordinance implements land development goals established in the City's [Master Plan](#).

**The Subdivisions Ordinance** mandates the design and layout of streets, landscaping, and property lines for future residential, commercial, and industrial subdivisions. This Ordinance would only apply to new developments with multiple buildings over a large area. Since the City is mostly developed, it would only apply if the City's expands beyond its current boundaries.

## What changes are proposed?

Both Ordinances have been reorganized, updated and formatted to be easier to understand. Also, both documents have been updated to comply with state and federal law, protecting the City from litigation, and incorporating environmental and sustainability measures. A full list of proposed changes can be found at

[https://www.dextermi.gov/government/boards\\_and\\_commissions/zouupdate.php](https://www.dextermi.gov/government/boards_and_commissions/zouupdate.php). Major changes in each Ordinance are:

- In the draft **Zoning Ordinance**, the properties in the downtown, surrounding commercial areas, village neighborhoods, Baker Road and Dexter Ann Arbor Road are proposed to become **form-based zoning districts**, where use and building **regulations are governed by the size of the lot, what type of street they are on and what is next to them**. Under the current rules, many of the iconic buildings and places in Dexter could not be built today. The form-based zoning recognizes that not all properties are the same, has rules to preserve the character of Dexter, high standards for new buildings and flexibility for unanticipated situations.
- The current **Subdivisions Ordinance** requires any new residential subdivisions to be designed like Dexter Crossing or Westridge. The proposed changes will allow another option for a **new neighborhood** to be **laid out in a more traditional neighborhood pattern, like the old Village**. The draft also proposes allowing **alleys, sidewalks and bicycle lanes** in all types of subdivisions.

## How would these changes affect me?

If you **live outside of the Village**, the rules will remain the same.

If you **live in the Village**, the form-based zoning will limit what new construction can occur in your neighborhood. For existing houses, larger porches up to five feet from the sidewalk are proposed and for new houses, attached garages must be located behind the front of the building.

If you own property in the **Downtown or Village Commercial zoning districts or on Baker or Dexter-Ann Arbor Road**, new construction would need to meet **updated design rules**, and **setbacks depending on the size of the lot and type of street**. Building updates and additions need not fully comply with new rules.

If you own a **business or property** or in the **Industrial Park** or in the **Limited Industrial or Research Development Zoning Districts**, the rules will remain the same, except for the landscaping required between industrial uses is proposed to no longer be required.

## What is the approval process and how can I participate?

The Planning Commission recommends the Ordinances to City Council, who approves them.

There will be a public hearing by the Planning Commission on September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Everyone is welcome to speak or submit comments in writing. Public comment would be welcome also at the City Council, before approval

## How can I get more information?

The full draft ordinances and the full list of proposed changes are available at [https://www.dextermi.gov/government/boards\\_and\\_commissions/zoupdate.php](https://www.dextermi.gov/government/boards_and_commissions/zoupdate.php)

The Community Development Department is available to answer any questions at 734-580-2235 or [gwhitney@dextermi.gov](mailto:gwhitney@dextermi.gov).